

Appl. No. 09/914,527  
Atty. Docket No. 7471  
Amdt. dated 1/14/2004  
Reply to Office Action of 10/27/2003  
Customer No. 27752

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

#### Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A process for preparing a detergent particle ~~characterized by~~ comprising the steps of:

- i) providing a particle core ~~characterized by~~ comprising a detergent active material;
- ii) passing said particle core to a coating mixer;
- iii) providing a an aqueous coating solution or slurry of comprising water and a water soluble, non-hydrating inorganic material to said coating mixer; ~~and~~
- iv) at least partially coating said particle core in said coating mixer to form a detergent particle; and
- v) removing said water from said detergent particle.

2. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said particle core ~~is~~ characterized by comprises a blend of anionic surfactants and dry detergent ingredients.

3. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in Claim 2, wherein said blend of anionic surfactant and dry detergent ingredients is selected from the group consisting of detergent agglomerates, spray-dried particles, detergent flakes and mixtures thereof.

4. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said coating mixer is selected from the group consisting of low speed mixers, fluid bed mixers, and combinations thereof.

5. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 4 wherein said coating mixer is ~~an~~ a fluid bed mixer.

6. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said water soluble, non-hydrating inorganic material is selected from the group consisting of alkali metal carbonate salts, alkali metal sulfate salts and mixtures thereof.

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7. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in Claim 6, wherein said water soluble, non-hydrating inorganic material is the double salt  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4:\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  in a weight ratio of  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$  to  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  of from about 80:20 to about 20:80.
8. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said step of providing said aqueous coating solution further ~~is characterized by~~ comprises the step of spraying said coating solution into said coating mixer.
9. (Cancel)
10. (Currently amended) A process for preparing a detergent particle ~~characterized by~~ comprising the steps of:
  - a) providing a surfactant material in the form of a paste or liquid and dry starting detergent materials;
  - b) blending said surfactant material and said dry starting detergent materials to form a particle core;
  - c) passing said particle core to a coating mixer;
  - d) providing ~~a~~ an aqueous coating solution or slurry of comprising water and a water soluble, non-hydrating inorganic material to said coating mixer; ~~and~~
  - e) at least partially coating said particle core in said coating mixer to form a detergent particle; and
  - f) removing said water from said detergent particle, whereby the surface area of said detergent particle of step (f) is at least 10% less than that of the particle core of step (e).